

**COMMUNICATIONS SYSTEM AND METHOD THEREFOR****Abstract**

Known communications systems for providing Near Video On-Demand services require a large quantity of bandwidth in order to transfer a number of time-staggered versions of an original data stream to a set-top decoders. In order to reduce bandwidth requirements, the present invention provides a communications system (100) for providing data streaming services to a plurality of client terminator units (122) by providing a multicast server (108) capable of delivering a number of time-staggered versions of an original data stream to the plurality of client terminator units (122). Consequently, the present invention advantageously obviates a need for a relatively large bandwidth to be provided for communications between a content providing server (102) and the multicast server (108).

20 (Figure 1)

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